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A STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS

ABOUT a year ago the New Haven High-School faculty undertook to send to the respective grammar-school principals of the city a brief report of the work done by their pupils during the first four months of high-school life. The standings of each pupil were indicated, not by percentages, but by A, B, C, or D, and comments were made as to general deportment, thoroughness of preparation and ability to take up high-school work. This effort proved of value not only to the grammar-school teachers, but to the high-school teachers also, who in making out these brief written statements acquired by the very care and thought it necessitated, a deeper insight into the individuality of these particular pupils, besides gaining additional skill in estimating and judging the work, motives, conduct and aptitudes of pupils in general. It was a genuine bit of pupil study.

Following this effort measures were devised for going still further, and gaining information concerning each pupil from various sources, with the reasonable expectation that completer acquaintance would react favorably on school life. It is the purpose of this paper to unfold the workings of a plan that starting in the simple way referred to, soon broadened in scope and became a most valuable and interesting feature of school administration.

At this point it is fitting that we should express our indebtedness to Principal Atkinson of the Springfield High School, with whom originated the idea of using question blanks in this particular way, namely, as a means of communication between one school and another, between the home and the school, and between pupils and teachers. Too much credit cannot be given Dr. Atkinson for the good that has grown, or may hereafter grow, out of this method of learning to know pupils. A comparison of the blanks given below with the blanks devised by him and printed in Vol. V of the SCHOOL REVIEW, will show that we

have not hesitated to take advantage of what he has so kindly made public. We also express obligation to Dr. William H. Burnham of Clark University for suggestive questions.

In the early part of last June the following letter was sent to the grammar-school principals :

HILLHOUSE HIGH SCHOOL
New Haven, Conn.

Dear——: The time is drawing near when pupils from your school will enter the high school. Few if any of them will be known personally to us, yet on our ability to adjust our efforts to their needs will depend to some extent their physical, mental and moral welfare.

I know you will agree with us when we say that if a school wishes to accomplish much for a pupil the teachers must be constantly asking such questions as these: What are this pupil's greatest needs? Are these needs ministered to by the school? What are this pupil's greatest possibilities? Is the school enabling him to realize them?

Yet how can we give intelligent replies to these and similar questions unless we know the pupil well?

Feeling as we do, that positive injury may attend the school life of misunderstood children, and that many do not reach the possibilities of which they are capable because more is not known of their individual characteristics, we are anxious to get from you and your teachers such information about the boys and girls who come to us from you as will enable us to deal wisely with them when they are transferred to our care.

If you will fill out the accompanying blanks, one for each pupil, returning them before the close of the term, I assure you, you will enable us to surround the entering class at Hillhouse High School with a much more helpful environment than would otherwise be possible. The work involved is considerable, yet we are confident that the teachers will welcome this as a means of practical coöperation between your school and ours in behalf of the young people in whom we shall all have hereafter a common interest.

Very sincerely yours

————— Principal

The blank form to which the letter refers asks information on upwards of thirty different points. To reduce the labor of the grammar-school teachers to a minimum these blanks are so worded and arranged that in eighteen instances a mere stroke of the pen indicates the information desired, while in most other cases the writing of but one word suffices. The blanks were

printed on a Rotary Neostyle, on letter-size paper. The form is as follows :

Report on ——

School, June 1898.

What school beside yours has this pupil attended ?

(In answering questions please cancel such words or expressions as do not apply to this pupil.)

1. *Home conditions*: favorable, unfavorable *Home discipline*: firm, lax.
Pupil is not held down to study. Do this pupil's parents visit the school or in any other way show particular interest in the educational welfare of the child ?

Comments:

2. *Physical condition*: general health
grows rapidly; is nervous; has headaches; is defective in sight; hearing:
Has attendance been irregular because of condition of health ? . . .

Comments:

3. *Characteristic traits*: bright, dull; quick, slow; ambitious, indifferent; self-confident, timid; methodical, careless; diligent, indolent; persevering, easily discouraged; self-controlled, hasty, headstrong; refined, coarse; polite, rude, impudent; straight-forward, sly.

Comments:

4. What can you say of this pupil in respect to the following particulars ?
 - 1 General information
 - 2 Outside reading
 - 3 Ability to memorize 4 Ability to think
 - 5 Power of concentration
 - 6 Ability in oral expression
 - 7 Written work

5. In what kind of school work does this pupil show greatest interest ? . . .
In what things, if any, does the pupil excel ?
Note things disliked or that are distasteful

Comments:

6. *General behavior*: . . . In what respects may this pupil cause trouble or annoyance ? . . . In case of difficulty in governing or fault in behavior, what method of discipline will be found helpful ?

7. *Outside interests and occupations*: Which, if any, of the following, takes the pupil's time to a considerable extent ? house work, music lessons, paper route, other work, viz. . . . In what other things does pupil show particular interest ? . . . Any specially marked talent or ability ? . . . To what extent, if any, has pupil's school work suffered on these accounts ? . . .

8. *Remarks*.

The grammar school and parochical schoolteachers filled out

blanks of this kind for about 300 pupils, their information being wise and discriminating, and their comments judicious and to the point. What an insight into child mind and child nature these elementary school-teachers have !

Our experiment certainly has resulted in some benefit. With questions like those on the blanks, telling teachers what to look for and laying stress on things that it is important to observe, a keener interest in pupils is induced ; the contact between pupils and teachers becomes more harmonious ; teachers observe more shrewdly, and they can see more in a child ; child nature becomes more intelligible. Therefore teachers are able to diagnose and prescribe better, with a tendency to become more just, more merciful, or more severe as the case may demand (for be it observed that severity is sometimes better than mercy) more long-suffering, far more tactful. It tends to invest school life with greater interest for the teacher. Indeed if one can enter into harmonious relations with child life or adolescent life it will go far towards making a teacher's life worth living. Aside from those whose ambitions are rewarded by attaining the higher administrative positions, teachers in general have little to look forward to unless they have that deep interest in children and knowledge of child nature that is the salt of a teacher's life, or, to drop our figure of speech, is an end in itself most worthy of attaining. It gives an objectivity to our work that is far more satisfying than the mere consciousness of having taught geography or algebra well.

But let us look somewhat in detail at a few of the reports received from the grammar schools. Of course we can give but brief summaries.

A. A boy.—*Home conditions* : favorable ; *health* : not good ; *traits* : bright and quick but indifferent and careless, uneven in his work ; polite but sly ; lacks application. *General information* : wide ; reads extensively ; poor in oral expression ; particularly interested in history. *Conduct* : poor ; whispers and acts out his impulses.

Remarks : A boy that needs watching and following up, and the parents will gladly coöperate.

Being forewarned in this way, proper measures may at once be taken with such a boy with gratifying results.

The question will naturally arise here, as to whether the information thus gained, in case it was of an unfavorable nature, would prejudice the high-school teachers against a boy or girl. Experience does not show that it does. Indeed the very opposite seems to be true; for an unfavorable report from the grammar school seems to inspire high-school teachers with a determination to save that boy (it is nearly always a *boy!*), and to begin at him right away and help him get a fresh start and a good hold.

B. A girl.—*Home discipline*: lax. *Characteristic traits*: slow, diligent, self-controlled. *General information*: scanty. *Power of concentration*: poor. *Ability in oral expression*: poor.

Remarks: General standing, C. Not bright but always interested. Often brought excellent books from the public library, relating to work being done in literature, science and history.

C. A boy.—*Home discipline*: lax, mother an invalid.

Remarks: This boy should be gotten at *personally* at once. He is *easily* thrown upon the wrong track. Liable to become sullen.

(It may readily be seen how such a suggestion would prove of great advantage, both to the boy and to his high-school teachers.)

D. A boy.—*Home discipline*: lax, Both parents much interested in his education. He grows rapidly. *Characteristic traits*: bright, quick, careless, self-confident, yet easily discouraged, hasty, polite, straightforward. Needs personal and individual pushing, has been babied at home. *Power of concentration*: undeveloped. Penmanship poor, substance fair. *Conduct*: ready to take advantage.

Remarks: A promising boy. Needs to be toughened.

E. A boy.—*Home discipline*: firm. *Physical condition*: grows rapidly, is nervous. *Outside occupations*: helps care for invalid grandmother. *Effect of this on school work*: the above has taxed him too much. He should be excused as much as possible from the confinement of school.

F. A boy.—*Characteristic traits*: bright in some studies, ambitious, self-confident, diligent. Parents are careful to provide books. Fond of reading historical works. *Outside occupations*: early paper route, causing the boy to be drowsy in school at times.

Remarks: A good boy. May be misunderstood by teachers at first but will be liked better on acquaintance. Full of wit and harmless boyish tricks, but always candid and upright.

G. A girl.—*Health*: delicate. *Traits*: dull, slow, timid, but methodical, persevering, and diligent. Not much general information; does little outside reading, ability in oral expression poor. Work always neatly done.

Remarks: A delicate child whose mother died with consumption. A little old fashioned in the way of expressing herself because she is brought up among grown-up people, being the only child in the family. Extremely sensitive and good.

H. A boy. *Health:* not good. *Traits:* average ability, ambitious to be thought brilliant, self-confident, careless, straightforward. Superficial. Little power of concentration, reads considerably, general information good.

Remarks: This boy does not judge himself fairly. He thinks he does much better than he really does. Does not work well. We recommended him after considerable discussion. He is perfectly able to do high-school work if he can be made to apply himself persistently.

I. A boy.—*Traits:* slow, careless, ambitious yet easily discouraged. *Ability in oral expression:* not good. *Written work:* poor. Excels in original work.

Remarks: This boy, all his teachers felt last year, is full of promise. In regular school work he was fair, and in English (*i. e.*, grammar, spelling, penmanship, and the *mechanics* of written work) *incorrigibly* and *insufferably* poor. He is inclined to assume a dogged air and stop thinking, if he *thinks* he cannot understand a matter. But he has a fine appreciative mind, full of originality and piquancy. For instance in debate he developed great readiness and resource. In composition he was of the best *as to the matter*, as to form, the poorest.

J. A boy.—*Physical conditions:* grows rapidly, nervous, looks delicate. *Traits:* slow, indifferent, indolent, easily discouraged, headstrong, sly, polite, rude, impudent, can be all three. *General information:* narrow. *Ability in expression:* poor. *Behavior:* bad, constantly finding some new annoyance.

Remarks: Wishes to leave school.

I am sure I need not comment on the above. No one needs to be told that with such information at hand a teacher will be able to deal more intelligently with his pupils, and get along with less friction and wasted effort.

But to know a pupil from the grammar-school teacher's standpoint alone is not enough; we ought to know something of him from the parents' standpoint. With this in view the following letter and blank form were sent to more than 700 homes.

HILLHOUSE HIGH SCHOOL
New Haven, Conn.

TO PARENTS:—

Beginning with this school year about 850 pupils are enrolled in Hillhouse High School. Nearly 350 of these are entire strangers to the teachers, while of the others but little is known beyond their deportment in school, their ability to recite their lessons, and a few of their more readily observed traits

of character. Yet we are expected to guide these young people wisely, inspire them, help them form useful habits, and at the same time guard their health, and promote a proper and reasonable enjoyment of life.

Now with this responsibility resting upon us, the best possible understanding of the health conditions, characteristic traits, and outside interests of our pupils, is of such supreme importance that we are anxious to get from you all the assistance you can give. Answers to the questions on the accompanying blank, based on a careful consideration of them, will be of great value to us, and will, we trust, result in a benefit to all parties concerned.

We realize that we are putting you to a great deal of trouble in asking you to reply to these questions, but as we are seeking information that you alone can give, we hope it will be possible for you to comply promptly with our request. In answering the questions we think it desirable that parents do not confer with their children. In each case we would be pleased to have the questions answered fully and frankly.

Very truly yours

Principal

PARENTS' MEMORANDA

Name of pupil

Health Conditions

Condition of health during the past year or two Any tendency to headache? Is eyesight or hearing defective? Sleeps about how many hours? (from eight to nine hours is a desirable average) Is time enough taken to eat a good breakfast before going to school? Are sufficient recreation and exercise taken each day? Mention any injurious effects that seem to be traceable to school influences or requirements On returning from school is there any headache, nervousness, fretfulness, or low spirits? Does this appear more marked at the end of the week? (If so, and it becomes more noticeable as the term progresses, we hope you will inform us of it.)

School Work

N. B.—Care of health and the development of a strong physique, especially with girls, is far more important than study. Considerations of health should always come first. But health permitting, plenty of good, hard study, is one of the cardinal virtues of school life. Regular study hours at home should be established, and conscientiously observed.

About how much time is spent in study at home in the morning? in the afternoon? in the evening? Are regular stated study hours observed or is the studying done spasmodically? Are lessons taken up willingly, or is there need of urging on your part? Do

you think too much is required by the school? Do you think more time could be spent in study without detriment to health? Which study, if any, is spoken of as the most difficult? Which as easiest?

Outside Interests

How much time is spent each day in work that is *not* school work? kind of work? Mention things in which particular interest is permanently shown Is any specially marked talent or ability shown? About how much time is spent in reading books *not* connected with school work? To what extent, if any, is the public library made use of?

Remarks and Suggestions

Signed.....

Name of parent

.....
Address

Nearly every parent or guardian responded, and out of the 700 or more returns a few of the more suggestive ones are selected for illustration. Of course only the most salient points of each are quoted. The first two will show what parents themselves say of this plan.

NUMBER ONE: (The parent after replying to the questions adds under "Remarks") "I must say I heartily endorse all of these questions being asked of the parents as I always feel that teachers many times would do differently by pupils did they understand them and I for one thank you kindly for this sheet of questions as I feel that you now will understand your pupils better."

NUMBER TWO: (In the same spirit of appreciation this parent says:) "The personal interest of the teacher *is* greatly to be desired. The mechanical recitations of the automaton are valueless. If an interest can be developed in the studies something will be learned. All school children (their elders likewise) lead two lives—the school life is one, the home life the other, both under different influences; the teacher knows one, the parent the other. I thank you for your evident interest and hope you will receive appreciative answers from all parents."

NUMBER THREE: (This parent makes valuable and interesting comments and then adds:) "Until recently C—— has suffered from very delicate

health and extremely nervous and introspective temperament. This together with exceptionally defective eyesight has retarded his progress in school. We think, he is interested in most studies so long as courage is kept up. Requires much encouragement and shows marked responsiveness to sympathy and kindly tact of teacher. Cannot overemphasize this fact. Can a *live* interest in literature be stimulated? Can the students be helped more to speak and write grammatically and fluently?"

Many of these reports are of a semi-confidential nature. They tell of defective physiques, of home environment, of difficulties attending the pupil's education, etc., occasionally an instance occurs where, because of the death of the mother, the father bespeaks the special interest of the teachers in behalf of his child. We cannot, of course, publish quotations from such.

A few parents feel perfectly free to comment on the teaching force. The following are illustrations:

NUMBER FOUR: "I think Mr. ——— might be more agreeable with his pupils."

NUMBER FIVE says, "I am partial to male teachers and for high schools especially so. I think, New Haven schools and high schools in particular would be far more satisfactory to the parents with a larger percentage of male teachers in the higher grades."

Some parents in their remarks touch on the art of teaching and methods of conducting recitation.

NUMBER SIX: "Ought not to be allowed to eat cake or candy at recess. Ought to be required to do thorough grammar work in connection with Caesar translations so as to place every word in its proper mode, tense, case, number, etc. Ought to be required in reciting to express herself accurately and not bunglingly. Unnecessarily loud voiced and harsh as a result of school influences. Low, sweet tones of voice do not seem to characterize public school children."

NUMBER SEVEN: (Speaking of his son's work in recitation, this parent says:) "Asked too suddenly or sharply he often *cannot* answer though appearing to be indifferent or not trying. Has good general capabilities but needs continual urging and encouraging to keep up the application necessary to produce good results."

Later by letter this father writes:

"A teacher ought to have better sense than to give a lesson in any single branch that requires four or five hours of hard work. The careless giving of lessons by different teachers occasionally produces combinations of work that

twelve hours would hardly finish as it should be done. Ask your pupils if this is not true. I am sure I could get better results with my boy, who stammers and gets a little confused when suddenly called upon, and laughs and appears indifferent to any censure or reproof, though deeply feeling it all the same, in a private school or with a single tutor. It ought not to be so. The high school ought to be the best place for the average boy."

This is sharp, but it is right to the point and is worth reading even outside of New Haven. Such letters serve as a most healthful corrective and tonic.

NUMBER EIGHT writes: "Encouragement and belief in D——'s ability to do well are great factors in his progress. We feel greatly indebted to his last teachers for their untiring interest and help. His great need is more outdoor life. We wish that he could have opportunities for tennis or baseball. He hardly seems strong enough to enter the regular football team though he is very fond of it. The fall season is rather hard on boys who are not football players as other games seem to be 'out of date.' Perhaps you will suggest more out of door life in other ways. We wish he might be encouraged to develop a talent for debating in a clear logical manner We are proud of the New Haven High School."

Some parents have much to say about overwork. We quote quite at length from one of the best, giving many of the questions and answers verbatim.

NUMBER NINE : (a mother answering for her daughter).

Condition of health during the past year or two ? Excellent.

Any tendency to headache ? In the past, no !

Are sufficient recreation and exercise taken each day ? Would be if lessons were not made so hard.

Mention any injurious effects that seem to be traceable to school influences or requirements. I consider her headaches are due to study, and, lessons being so hard, to her being unable to get outdoor exercise.

On returning from school is there any headache, nervousness, fretfulness, or low spirits ? Yes, headache and low spirits ; worried for fear she won't be able to get all her lessons.

Are regular stated study hours observed, etc. ? There are regular hours, and it never ought to take over three hours, but yesterday it took over five hours and English had to be neglected as I would not allow her to remain up any longer.

Do you think that too much is required by the school ? Emphatically I do.

How much time is spent each day in work that is not school work ? I would like an hour for music, but have been unable to get it in.

Remarks and suggestions: As near as possible I have answered these questions. I do think my daughter is overworked, and I will not be at all surprised to receive a poor report. She is unable to accomplish all that is given her. She is faithful and anxious to please. Yesterday she had to leave English unprepared and this morning her English teacher naturally wanted to know why, and could, or would not understand it, and said she was tired of marking D. I do not blame her, but I would suggest that each teacher remember a pupil has other lessons to prepare and if they make them shorter the pupils will come better prepared in that special study. Yesterday in Algebra she had twenty-six examples and today fifteen. I know the teachers are not entirely to blame for in a certain time just so much ground must be covered. In 1894 when my son entered High they had four studies; today my daughter comes home with six, nearly double the work. Will you tell me why?

Today she began her lessons at 3:30. Studied until after six and then began after supper and studied until I sent her to bed twenty minutes of nine, having given less than an hour to music and no time for outdoor exercise. Truly this is only one case of many, and she will not be able to stand the strain."

In contrast to this story of overwork is the following from a Yale professor.

About how much time is spent in study at home? Last year about half an hour (on Algebra); this year as yet not more than ten minutes.

Do you think too much is required by the school? Not at all.

Is any specially marked talent or ability shown? No.

Remarks: "As to the question of requirement of more time Most of last year I felt that any boy in decently good condition could do more studying without any detriment to his health; but in April and May I think the pressure was quite sufficient. I believe that the school year could be longer to advantage.

So far we have been considering methods of gaining information about pupils from grammar schools and from homes. Almost as important as these reports are, the reports that should go back from the high-school teachers to the homes, and, in the case of the first year pupils, to the grammar schools. Feeling that the usual mode of reporting is inadequate and unsatisfactory (we refer to the custom of reporting in percentages, or by the letters A, B, C, D, or some similar device), we have recently determined on the following form:

MONTHLY STANDINGS

A, excellent; B, good; C, passable but unsatisfactory; D, deficient.

Attendance; deportment; Sept. Oct., etc.
studies

Excused absences

Unexcused absences

Excused tardiness

Unexcused tardiness

Deportment

English

Elective English

Composition

Latin

Greek

Latin and Greek composition

French

German

Algebra

Geometry

Trigonometry

Physical geography

Physics

Chemistry

Biology: botany, zoölogy

Civics

History

Economics

Social science

History of commerce

Commercial geography

Commercial law

Bookkeeping

Commercial arithmetic

Business practice

Stenography

Typewriting

Drawing

SPECIAL REPORT AND CRITICISMS

~~82~~ Teachers place an X followed by their initials, opposite the traits to which attention is called.
Sept. Oct., etc.

ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL WORK

lacks earnestness and purpose

does not show right spirit

lacks concentration

mind easily diverted

indolent

wastes time

work carelessly done

copies; gets too much help

gives up too easily

not methodical; lacks system

shows improvement

RECITATION

comes poorly prepared

appears not to try

seldom does well

easily confused

lacks power of expression

inattentive

capable of doing much better

work shows a falling off

shows improvement

CONDUCT

restless, inattentive

inclined to mischief

bad

rude, discourteous at times

annoys others

influence not good

whispers too much

shows improvement

STUDIES

specially deficient in

" " "

" " "

" " "

irregular attendance affects work

has done poorly on tests

One of the teachers remarked, when the first draft of this report was submitted for criticism and suggestions: "that is the most *human* report I ever saw." It certainly is human. It aims at telling parents something intelligible about their children's work. It gives them something definite to go by, and opens their eyes to facts in a way that A, B, C, D, or percentages, can not be made to do.

So far we have spoken of the reports received from the grammar and parochial schools and from the homes, and have shown the kind of report that goes from the high school back to the homes, and also in the case of first year pupils back to the schools from which those pupils have recently come.

But no pupil study scheme can be complete unless the pupils themselves are heard from. To make this possible a question blank was drawn up, late in the fall, and placed before the pupils for answers. There was no compulsion about this. Each one could answer or not as he pleased, and he was told to feel perfectly at liberty to omit any questions he pleased. Some did not care to fill out the blanks at first, but eventually all came into line, and the result is a most interesting and useful mass of opinion concerning school and daily life, from a pupil's standpoint. The blanks contain 35 questions, as follows:

HILLHOUSE HIGH SCHOOL

TO THE PUPIL: Please answer all these questions frankly and honestly, and as fully as time will permit.

I. PERSONAL AIMS, PURPOSES, ETC.

1. Why do you come to school? (Do not answer merely, "To get an education.")
2. After leaving school what business, or occupation, if any, do you expect to follow? What circumstances influence your choice?
3. If the way were open to you, what would be the goal of your highest ambitions in life?
4. So far as you know have you a weakness or defect in hearing or sight? Have you consulted a physician in regard to this?

II. SCHOOL LIFE, AND METHODS OF STUDY

1. How much do you study at home in the morning? In the afternoon? In the evening?

2. During study hours what things prevent close application to your books? How do you guard against mind wandering?
3. Do you study in a room by yourself or where other members of the family are conversing?
4. Do you study by yourself or in company with fellow students?
5. In what ways do your parents show interest in your school work?
6. What is the most pleasant feature of your high-school life? The least pleasant?
7. What things, if any, interfere with your making a good recitation?
8. What temptations or inducements to practice deceit do you find in school? Speak frankly.
9. What do you think can and ought to be done to remove or correct these?
10. As you advance in school do you find that you are gaining something practical and useful, or not? Give reasons for your opinion?
11. Make any suggestions that occur to you for improving the school.
12. What suggestions would you make in regard to the methods of discipline in the school?
13. Many drop out of school entirely on leaving grammar school. What reasons do you hear boys and girls give for not going to high school?
14. Think of your favorite teachers; then, without mentioning names, put down the reasons why you like them.

III. OUTSIDE INTERESTS

1. What kind of work, not school work, are you required to do? How much time does this take?
2. If you are willing to tell us, we would be glad to know how you spend your leisure time.
3. What musical instrument, if any, do you play?
4. How often do you take music lessons?
5. How much do you practice?
6. With what organizations and classes (religious, literary, [including lessons in elocution,] social, dancing, athletic, etc.) are you connected?
7. How much time do you devote to these?
8. Mention other things in which you are especially interested.
9. What kind of manual or constructive work do you like best? What tools, if any, do you handle well? Mention things you have made or done with tools.
10. State what kind of a collection (stamps, eggs, etc.) you are making, and tell how extensive it is.

IV. COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Somehow I look at a pupil through different eyes after I have read his answers to these questions. For instance, question 3

says: "If the way were open to you, what would be the goal of your highest ambition in life?" and in one paper I read this: "The highest ambition of my life is to have a sign in front of my house on which would appear the words: 'Fred. M. Jones, M.D.'" Now "Fred." has been a different boy to me ever since I read that. This little self-revelation of his has given me an insight into his life that makes him much more interesting to me. When I see the boy now I am not unlikely to hear the creaking of that sign or to get a glimpse of the "doctor" through the "office" window, or to see him hurrying along the street with his little black case, on his errand of healing, and I am more likely than I was before to study his interests. By doing this perhaps I can help keep alive that worthy ambition of his—for in his case it certainly is a worthy ambition—and perhaps I can do something toward making his schooling result in the greatest possible benefit to him, to the end that he may be above the average when he gets into his chosen profession.

A teacher would be richly repaid for his time and trouble in working over these returns. Pages might be written on each question with its accompanying answers. I shall call attention briefly however, to but few of these, selecting those that are most interesting. Take, for instance, this question: "What things, if any, interfere with your making a good recitation?" The answers may be grouped under four heads.

1. Nervousness and bashfulness.

"I get nervous." "Am afraid to speak in class." "I get rattled." "I am very nervous and when I get up to recite they all look at me and that very often makes me mix my sentences, and altogether make a poor recitation." "Sometimes I feel prepared but when I stand up to recite I get confused." "I have my lessons all learned but when I stand up to recite I get nervous and cannot do well." "Being bewildered."

2. Giggling, whispering, and hand raising of pupils.

"I do not say all that I desire for fear some might laugh." "Scholars raise their hands if I stop a moment to think." "Pupils try to whisper answers to me when I know them." "When there is a class in the room that is noisy." "Pupils try to help me."

3. Mannerisms, habits, and peculiarities of teachers.

"The teacher stares at you so." "Fear of being criticised by the teacher."

"A certain teacher makes me so nervous when I get up to recite that I seem to forget everything." "Interruptions by the teacher." "Teacher is impatient and thereby confuses me." "The way the teachers go at anyone." "Confusion caused by crossness on the part of the teacher." "Because they fly at you when you make a mistake." "In the only recitation in which I do hesitate and am interfered with, the cause is fear of some sarcastic remark." "Feeling that if I hesitate a certain teacher that I have will mark me off for it." "Teachers mix me up." "I cannot understand what the teacher is trying to to get at."

4. Miscellaneous.

"Constantly afraid I will fail." "I use a foreign language at home, so get my English grammar twisted." "Forgot what I was going to say." "Inability to bluff." "Hard to express myself." "Not enough time to think."

It seems to me that no comments on the above are necessary. Each one who reads this can make his own inferences and applications.

The replies to the following question are quite suggestive: "Many drop out of school entirely on leaving grammar school. What reasons do you hear boys and girls give for not going to high school?" Those answers, too, may be grouped under definite heads.

1. Necessity of going to work.

"They have to go to work." "Parents cannot afford to support them any longer." (Such answers are quite frequent.)

2. Tired of school.

"They wish to be free from school duties, so as to enjoy themselves." "Monotony of school is wearying." "Tired of school." "Sick of school." "Rather work than study."

3. Afraid to work; high-school work too hard.

"High school is too hard." "The school is too strict." "Have heard that the lessons are too hard." "Afraid they will be dropped." "Some have older brothers or sisters who have been to the high school, and they have told how hard it was and strict, and it has discouraged the younger ones."

4. High-school education not practical enough; is of no special value unless one is going to college.

"High school is not practical enough for common people." "No benefit if one is not going to college." "They think grammar-school education is sufficient." (Many replies of similar nature.)

It should be noted that most of the answers quoted above

represent the opinions not of single individuals, but of many. Answers identical in substance occur again and again, and therefore may be considered as representing the actual state of affairs. Hence we have here a very mine of information bearing on the most vital points of school economy and pedagogy. This is especially true of the following:

"Think of your favorite teachers; then, without mentioning names, put down the reasons why you like them."

The pupils often show what they like by telling what they do not like. The answers to this question, like those above, easily fall under several heads.

1. The favorite teacher's attitude towards pupils.

"Just as nice in school as outside of school." "They like their scholars, and do not act as if teaching was a disagreeable occupation and the scholars a stupid lot." "I like those that like me, and give me a fair chance in recitation." "Treat all alike." "Puts you at your ease," "Seems to take more interest in me than any other teacher." "Fair, just, cheerful, jolly, patient, uses common sense, is a good disciplinarian, strict, allows no fooling."

2. The favorite teacher in recitation.

"Explains lessons and makes them clear." (Over and over again is this point emphasized.) "Is definite and explicit." "Gives definite lessons." "Holds you responsible for every part of the lesson." "Because after a lesson with her I have learned something I can never forget." "Does not talk all the time about *marks*." "Does not stick to the same mark whether you do better or not." "Does not criticise you in class, but talks quietly with you after school." "One recitation seems more like a family circle than a class room." "She doesn't say 'Sit down' the minute you stand up." "They do not talk about it half an hour if a scholar fails." "If you get rattled they help you."

3. The favorite teacher's manner.

"Are not cross." (This is said by many.) "Do not make cutting remarks." "Do not call you down before the class." "Do not treat you like a mere child, as some teachers do." "Not too pedantic." "Even-tempered, self-controlled." "Appreciates a joke as well as other people." "Not too severe when lessons are incorrect." "Not cross when you do not know your lessons well." "She is pleasant and honest." "Patient when you get embarrassed." "If you are embarrassed, encourages you." "Not easy, but forbearing, never allowing anger to rise over trifles." "Says 'Please.'" "They do not fly at you when you make a mistake."

4. Sarcastic teachers are not favorites. (This fault in teachers receives special attention.)

The favorite teacher "is not sarcastic," "not always growling and sarcastic if you happen to make a mistake." "If, perchance, once in a while you have not got your lesson as thoroughly as you might, they do not scold and are not *sarcastic*." "We very much dislike a sarcastic teacher."

5. Ability to govern is an essential trait.

Teachers are liked "because they have order and discipline." "Are strict, but not cranky." "Are good disciplinarians." "I dislike the ones who are very particular." "They are strict and make the pupils learn." "I like the teacher who is strictest, because you have to get your lesson or be ashamed." "Because I have to get my lessons." "They have perfect order in the room." "Keeps the room so quiet that I can always make a good recitation."

Summarizing these comments we get, as it were, a composite photograph of the ideal teacher from the pupils' standpoint. The ideal teacher is one who is never cross, but is reasonably strict; keeps good order; has a quiet room; holds pupils responsible for every part of the lesson; explains thoroughly; goes to the point; is fair and impartial; is not fussy; does not get out of patience; does not "fly" at you when you make a mistake; does not keep interrupting with questions when you are reciting; is as pleasant in class as outside of school; and if she errs anywhere, errs on the side of leniency.

It seems to me it would be difficult to find a shrewder and more common sense lot of comments than these. There are few, if any, teachers in the country who cannot be lifted to a higher plane of efficiency by giving heed to these observations. Here are "shoes" for everyone! In reading what children say about favorite teachers we certainly get a self-revelation. Indeed, we are brought here to *teacher* study, which, after all, is quite as important as pupil study, and evidently these youngsters of ours have been doing a great deal of faithful work in this direction. Perhaps, for us teachers, here is that power that Burns longed for in the lines that are familiar to all:

O wad some pow'r the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as ithers see us,
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
And foolish notion.